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US ARMY

USAG Schinnen Tri-Border News Notes



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Interactive
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Evaluation

Schinnen Retiree Council elects officers, kicks-off operations

Strong attendance encourages commander, urges retirees to sustain momentum

By Tom Budzyna

Schinnen's Retiree Council, designed to communicate issues to the Chief of Staff of the Army and other Department of Defense senior leaders, met May 16 to kick off operations to support local military retirees.

A score of military retirees filled the Queen Emma conference room to receive updates, share information and enjoy camaraderie among retirees who call the Netherlands home.

When the meeting adjourned, the following council officers were elected: president, Air Force Tech. Sgt. (Ret.) Conrad Payne; vice president, Army Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Robert L. Mosley; Secretary, Air Force Lt. Col. (Ret.) Peter Passchier. The minimum of three additional members was easily surpassed and the council will hold their next meeting in Sept. 2007.

"It is encouraging to see the first meeting so well attended," said Chuck Westpheling, president of the Benelux Retiree Council, who explained the link to military senior leaders through the Retiree Council to the group.

Retiree councils have been instrumental in urging

senior Army leaders to be advocates for retirees and counter trends by local commanders to reduce retiree services. Successes include ensuring retiree's access to commissaries, exchange services and mailroom privileges.

The retiree forum also enabled participants to share useful tips and information with each other or, in the very least, identify with common experiences that make military retirees or surviving spouses in the Netherlands a unique group

The entire Army community includes 685,000 retirees, 80,000 "gray area" reservists (Soldiers who have completed their 20-year obligation for retirement but are not eligible for retired pay until age 60), and 200,000 surviving spouses.

These Soldiers and spouses are a valuable part of our community because they are a tangible reminder of the service of countless Soldiers throughout our Nation's history.

Many retirees are active members of unit associa-



The USAG Schinnen Retiree Services Officer, Ronald F. Holland (left) is seen here with the Schinnen Retiree Council's president, U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. (Ret.) Conrad Payne, elected May 16.

tions that participate in ceremonies commemorating past unit achievements, sponsor volunteer projects in local communities and support recruiting efforts.

For today's Soldiers, retirees are a compelling example of Army values and an important reminder of our duty to something larger than ourselves.

For more information on how to become a member of the Retiree Council or participate in local events, contact Ronald F. Holland, the USAG Schinnen Retiree Services Officer, DSN 360-7320.

More information about Army Retiree Services and their mission can be found on the Internet at:

<http://www.army.com/resources/item/1361>.

Join our military retiree community!

Tell us what you think!

https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&service_provider_id=89130&site_id=684&service_category_id=2

\$20K bonuses offered to officers who extend their service obligation

By Sgt. Matthis Chiroux,
USAREUR Public Affairs

The word is out. Captains are in high demand, and the Army's doling out unprecedented retention bonuses to keep them.

If you're an O-3 who's completed your initial active-duty service obligation – ADSO in Army-speak – and have less than eight years of active federal service, you may be eligible to receive a \$20,000 bonus for extending your service obligation an additional three years.

According to a memorandum from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense: "Effective immediately, the following Army company-grade commissioned officer basic branches (are designated) as critical: Air Defense Artillery; Adjutant General; Armor; Chemical; Engineer; Field Artillery; Finance; Infantry; Military Intelligence; Military Police; Ordnance; Quartermaster; Signal; Transportation; Medical Service Corps; and Army Nurse. Officers (of specified branches can) execute a writ-

ten agreement that provides for a three-year service obligation in exchange for a lump sum payment of \$20,000."

"This will most likely be offered to most basic branch captains with a date of rank between Aug. 1, 2005, and Jan. 1, 2007," said Col. David Ellis, U.S. Army, Europe's deputy G-1, or chief of personnel. "These officers will be reaching the end of their ADSO and the bonus is one of the incentives that may be offered to get them to stay in."

The Army has already offered other retention inducements to some junior officers, Ellis said, including expanded graduate and military school opportunities, choice of branch and choice of initial post of assignment.

The bonus announcement comes at a time when many worry that continued deployments may be hurting officer retention. But, as Ellis pointed out, attrition among captains has been lower since 9/11 than it was in the 1990s. He suggests the new bonuses may have roots in transfor-

mation and preparing the force for future requirements.

"The transformed Army has many more officer authorizations than what we began 2006 with," Ellis said. "Most of the growth is in captain and major slots, and the Army is expecting to be short more than 1,500 majors against new authorizations in 2009. Naturally, it takes many years to 'grow' a major, so the more captains we keep; the more we can close the gap."

Aviation and Special Forces officers are not eligible for this bonus, but according to an Army news release an incentive program for those officers will be developed later this year.

This bonus may again be offered to captains during fiscal years 2008 and 2009, subject to congressional reauthorization of the program.

According to Ellis, "this is all part of a very reasonable, well thought-out and researched strategy to maintain the outstanding quality officer corps our Army depends on today."

Motorcycle safety range forces overnight, long-term parking lot to move *Training planed for local riders, accident prevention is the goal*

By Tom Budzyna

The parking lot adjacent the Schinnen community picnic/sports area transitioned to a dual-use area May 25 to allow its use as a motorcycle safety training range. The lot is still available for normal parking except when motorcycle safety training is scheduled.

The installation's Designated Overnight Parking Area is now located adjacent to the Director of Public Works (DPW), Building 21.

Kevin Mutchler, the USAG Schinnen Safety Manager says, "Our new motorcycle training range enables us to meet the Army's requirements, which complement the standards established by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, and occurs just in time for the summer season when there is an increased focus on accident prevention."

Safety, both on and off duty, is an enduring Army goal. The Command Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston

says, "Accidents can be reduced, and many times prevented, by choosing the correct motorcycle and having the proper equipment and training."

In addition of the motorcycle training range, more garrison activities are

day weekend and riders can compete for Harley Davidson leather jackets provided by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and other motorcycle gear.

The Schinnen Safety Office has scheduled sessions on the new motorcycle training range for June 29, July 27, Aug. 31, Sept. 21, Oct. 8 and 19. Signs will be placed at parking lot entrances two days prior to these dates to remind personnel to park elsewhere. Personnel are also advised not to park vehicles overnight in the lot adjacent to the Commissary.

Personnel going on temporary duty are still required to pick-up an overnight parking pass from the Provost Marshall Office *before* departing on TDY and will be reminded then to park their vehicle in the lot adjacent to DPW, Building 21.

For more information about motorcycle safety training and the upcoming Independence Day activities, contact Kevin Mutchler, DSN 360-7270.



USAG Schinnen Commander, Lt. Col. Eric Tilley and Schinnen driver testing chief instructor, Wauter Vermeulen participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new motorcycle training range at the Schinnen Emma Mine Complex May 25.

slated. A motorcycle safety day called the "Freedom Poker Run" will be held on Geilenkirchen Airbase July 7. This event occurs over the Independence Day holi-

No matter the culture - a contract is a contract and a deal is a deal

Get free assistance and good intelligence before signing on the dotted line

By the Netherlands Law Center Staff

If you live in the Netherlands, then you will inevitably enter into a few, if not several, Dutch contracts. For example, residential leases, telephone and cable TV plans, and car repairs all involve agreements with local individuals or companies.

When a Servicemember's PCS date approaches, however, problems may arise with respect to the duration of these contracts and their terms for cancelling the service.

Many contracts last for one year. Such contracts cannot be terminated during this period unless agreed upon by both parties. Moreover, if these contracts are not terminated in a timely fashion at the end of the year, they often automatically renew

for another year. So, if you dislike your Internet or insurance company because of poor customer service, you can only terminate the contract at the end of the year after giving timely notice.

The conditions for termination can be found in the contract. Larger companies use certain *general conditions* that they refer to as being part of the contract but which may not actually be spelled out in the contract itself. These general conditions usually cover issues such as payments, delivery dates, warranty, termination, etc. The Netherlands Law Center can provide you with the information you need to know concerning these general conditions.

Be aware that most contracts require a format for termination, such

as a registered letter. Just giving them a telephone call and expressing your desire to terminate will NOT do the trick.

Finally, most contracts will be in Dutch. There is no legal obligation for a contract in the Netherlands to be in English.

So, do not act on impulse!

Get to know the contract conditions. When in doubt, just tell the other party that you cannot sign the contract until a Dutch speaking friend or your legal assistance office has reviewed the contract.

Please contact the Netherlands Law Center at DSN 364-6204 with any questions you may have or to review a contract you have, or have not yet, signed.

Some Soldiers stationed overseas want to change their state of legal residence. These Soldiers give many reasons but more often than not the goal is to avoid state income tax. However, changing one's state of legal residence involves more than heading over to finance and filling out a DD Form 2058.

In order to become a resident of a particular state, a Soldier must demonstrate significant ties to that state as well as an intent to return and live in that state permanently. Ways to do this include obtaining a valid driver's license, registering to vote, purchasing property, etc. This can be a fairly involved process. Please contact the Netherlands Law Center if you have any questions or require additional information about changing your state of legal residency.

New Online Tool Simplifies Financial Aid Process

FAFSA4caster Gives College Hopefuls Jump Start on Federal Aid Availability

A new online tool to help students and families prepare financially for college before a student's senior year of high school is now available.

The FAFSA4caster, it provides high school juniors with an early estimate of their eligibility for federal financial aid, which could include a Pell Grant of up to \$4,310 based on financial need.

"Improving college access and affordability is key to giving more Americans a chance at higher education and keeping America competitive," said U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, who introduced the tool in late March.

"Families need more information-sooner-about students' federal aid eligibility so that they can plan ahead for college. The FAFSA4caster gives families an important tool they can use to make decisions about the future."

The FAFSA4caster: calculates a student's eligibility for federal student aid, including grants. Reduces the time it will take to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and simplifies the financial aid process for students and families.

The FAFSA4caster allows for an easy transition to FAFSA on the Web, the online version of the federal application. It pre-populates 51 of the 102 questions on the FAFSA, significantly reducing the time it takes for students to complete the FAFSA in their senior year of high school.

The FAFSA4caster is available in both English and Spanish at <http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov>.

MWR Trips & Tours

Shopping and Sightseeing Trip to



Paris

Saturday 30 June \$49

Visit the City of Lights, the capitol of France with its Eiffel Tower, historical buildings, museums and shopping.

Departs Schinnen Sat 4:00 a.m. Arrives in Paris around 10 a.m.
Departs Paris around 7:30p.m. and arrives back on Schinnen Sunday morning around 2:00 a.m.

For more information call the Schinnen Fitness Center
DSN 360-7561 / Com 046-443-7561
SchinnenFC@benelux.army.mil



POLYNESIAN DANCERS



Tuesday, 5 June
USAG Schinnen Sports Center
7 - 8 p.m. Show Time
Followed by short photo session.

SHOW IS FREE!
Doors open at 5:45 p.m.

Luau Dinner \$7.00 / plate
Kakua Pig
Hawaiian Luau rice
Polynesian Corn
Dinner served 6 - 7 p.m.



For show details call
DSN 360-7488



Leisure Activities ~ by Rita Hoefnagels

June 1: Attractive *Evening Year Market* in the center of Maaseik (BE).

Park Fair at the Castle grounds in Oosterhout (NL) with lots of cultural, musical and theatrical activities. Entry: €17.50.

June 2 & 9: *Dutch Army Open House Days* at Prinses Margriet Caserne in Wezep (NL). There is a lot to do and see. Display of old and new war material and demonstrations.

June 2-3: *Scotland Festival* at "Hollandse Biesbosch" on Baanhoekweg 75 in Dordrecht (NL) with of course Highland-games, stands, demonstrations, shows, bagpipes and lots more. Open: June 2, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; June 3, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Entry: €17; children (7-12) €6. For more information: www.schotlandfestival.nl.

Through June 3: *International Sand Sculpture Festival* at beach in Scheveningen (NL) with participation of many national and

many international artists.

June 3: *Flea Market* at Suytkade on Nieuwe Industrieweg in Helmond (NL). Open: 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Entry: €1.

Reptile Fair at Groenordhallen on Willem de Zwijgerlaan 2 in Leiden (NL). Open: 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Entry: €5.

June 7-10: At the *Home & Garden Fair* in Jaarbeurs in the center of Utrecht (NL) you will find everything to make life at home or in your garden more attractive. The fair has also many workshops and demonstrations. Open: June 7-8, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; June 9-10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Entry: €12.50.

June 8-10: *Culinary Fair* with the participation of many regional restaurants at Broekhuizenlaan in Leersum (NL) near the Broekhuizen Estate. A fair where one will get a snack and a drink at an attractive location. Also live entertainment. Open: June 8, 4

p.m.-midnight; June 9, 1 p.m.-midnight; and June 10, 1-10 p.m. Entry: €5.

June 9: "*Vlaggetjesdag*" in the harbor of Scheveningen (NL). Festivities around the first catch of herring with demonstrations of old crafts, traditional costumes and tasting of the "first caught" herring. No entrance fee.

June 9-10: From 10 a.m.-6 p.m. *Strawberry Festival* in the center of Zundert (NL) with fair and free strawberry tasting.

June 10: *Year Market* with lots attractions, rides and fun games in the center of Nuland (NL) from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Through Sept. 7: A *Cheese and Old Crafts Market* is held every Friday, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Waagplein in the center of Alkmaar (NL).

Get up and go!

Schinnen Community Update

Dutch Headstart: The next Dutch Headstart will be from 4-8 June. Learn a little of the local language and culture. Classes run from 0900-1400 Monday through Thursday and then on Friday ride along with ACS on their Newcomers' Orientation Tour. See local sites and attractions and begin your Dutch odyssey. Contact the Treebeek Education Center to sign up.

Sato Travel is holding a Travel Fair Cruise on Friday June 1, from 09.00-12.00 hours. Please come and visit our office to receive more info on cruises to any destination.

The Schinnen Property Book Office will be closed June 25-29 due to training.

For Tickets to the 2007 AUSA Benelux Army Ball to be held June 15, contact 360-7295 or 046-443-7295 by May 24.

The Schinnen housing office will conduct a mandatory housing newcomers briefing here on Schinnen, Bld 18 every Tuesday at 10:30 effective Tuesday Jun 12th. The purpose of this briefing will be to inform our customers of policies and procedures related to housing.

University of Maryland University College Term 5 registration is going on now through June 1. Don't miss your opportunity to take courses that will lead to a college degree. Register today at the Treebeek Education Center.

New at UMUC, lunch time English 101 course. Register at the Treebeek Education center during Term 5 registration dates. Get a college introductory course education during a schedule that fits you. Class begins June 4 and will run every Mon-Thurs. from noon to 1:30.



Weekly activities and field trip destinations like Bobbejaanland, Phantasialand and Snow World are sure to keep your child happily occupied over the summer.

School Age Services | Youth Services

For children who have completed 1st Grade / 1Y3. Pay by the week, \$36-\$104, depending on total family income. Includes all field trips, meals and snacks.

To sign-up call
DSN 364-2575 or CIV 045 526-2575

For children who have completed 6th Grade / M2. Afternoons are free, mornings are \$5 and field trips are pay as you go. Meals and snacks provided.

To sign-up call
DSN 364-3008 or CIV 045 526-3008

Must be a Child and Youth Services (CYS) member to enroll in the program. CYS membership fees: \$18 per year. A current Health Assessment and an Immunization Record are needed prior to registration at CER, HQ JFC Brunssum, Bldg. 505, DSN 364-3121 / 4192

Summer Camp Programs are open to all U.S. & NATO ID card holders in the USAG Schinnen / Tri-Border Community.